

150 workers to be laid off in company closing

By Melanie Hennessey
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

After 18 years in Milton, Mueller Canada is closing down its Lawson Road operation, putting about 150 area residents out of work.

The manufacturing facility that produces products for the water and gas industries will shut its doors at the end of July due to a restructuring by its parent company, Walter Industries Inc.

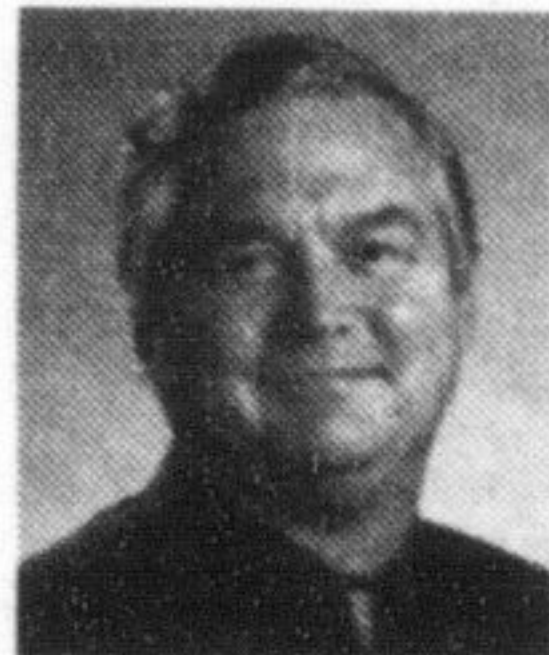
A press release from Walter Industries said, "This plant closure is part of Walter Industries' continued facility rationalization strategy following its acquisition of Mueller Water Products."

It went on to say, "Valve production at Milton will be transferred to Mueller's Chattanooga, Tenn. facility and hydrant production will be transferred to Mueller's Albertville, Ala. Plant."

Donna Cordner, human resources manager at Mueller Canada, said employees were made aware of the closure April 20.

"We're setting up an access centre in house to help people find employment," she said.

The Conservation Zone



by Peter Love,
Chief Energy
Conservation
Officer of Ontario

Calling All Ontarians:
Take the "10% by 2007" Challenge
In Ontario, we can no longer take
our energy supply for granted.

As the old saying goes, "A penny saved is a penny earned." True yesterday, true today, and true tomorrow. And so it goes that a kilowatt saved is also a kilowatt that doesn't have to be generated. A saved kilowatt often costs less than new supply. Best of all, it costs you nothing.

There are several no-cost ways we could save kilowatts effortlessly if we all:

- turn down the air conditioner
- use cold water to wash clothing
- cook with a microwave instead of the stove
- unplug that old fridge in the basement

There is no question that in Ontario today, conserving energy is no longer an option. It's a necessity.

We need to become smarter about our electricity use. Last summer, I issued an Electricity Conservation Challenge, urging commercial and institutional organizations to reduce their electricity consumption by 10%. The Government of Ontario also plans to reduce the growth in electricity peak demand by five per cent across the province by 2007.

Are you ready? I challenge all Ontarians to take the "10% by 2007" oath with me. Think about the ways you use electricity in your home or business, and then think about easy ways you could cut that consumption by just ten per cent. Think about how many dollars it would keep in your pockets?

The Conservation Bureau is currently operating two programs: *Every Kilowatt Counts* (www.everykilowattcounts.ca) and *Cool Savings* (www.coolsavingsrebate.ca), which give you more tools to save money and electricity.

The Conservation Bureau develops and delivers programs to help Ontario residents conserve energy and save money. For more information, please visit www.conservationbureau.on.ca.

Prior to Mueller Canada opening its doors locally in 1988 it merged with Canada Valve, which had a manufacturing facility set up in Milton.

Cordner said about one quarter of the current staff are former Canada Valve employees, some of who've put in 25 years of service. "We have a lot of people who've been here many years."

She said current customers will continue to receive all of their Mueller products as usual, since a small warehouse will be set up somewhere in Ontario. "We're taking care of all of our customers."

Mueller Canada's products are used in water and gas distribution, water and wastewater treatment, oil production, food and beverage processing and pharmaceutical production.

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